DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 969 CE 066 444

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TITLE	Women Returning to Higher Education.
INSTITUTION	Society for Research into Higher Education, Ltd., London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-335-19055-3
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	171p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Open University Press, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 (paperback: ISBN-0-335-19055-3, $33; hardbound: ISBN-0-335-19056-1, $79).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Students; Continuing Education; Educational Theories; Females; Feminism; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Longitudinal Studies; *Nontraditional Students; *Outcomes of Education; Questionnaires; Reentry Students; Sex Differences; Student Attitudes; *Student Educational Objectives; Theory Practice Relationship; *Womens Education
IDENTIFIERS	*England

ABSTRACT

In 1983 43 adult women who returned to pursue full-time undergraduate studies at two institutions of higher education in England's East Midlands around 1980 were interviewed. In 1991, efforts were made to trace and reinterview the women. Of the 25 women located, 23 were interviewed a second time. When first interviewed, the women were certain that education was going to increase their employment opportunities and their independence from traditional family structures. Their perceptions of the role of education bore much more resemblance to notions of education as opportunity as expressed by the early pioneers of education for women than they did to the ideas of most feminist theorists of the nature of education for women and girls today. A small group of the women used their degrees to further existing careers. A second small group found it difficult to use their education in careers at all. The two most typical outcomes of the women's higher education, however, were lateral moves to another career and advancement to management or a professional career. (Appended are the two interview schedules.) Contains 100 references. (MN)

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